

**Application No.:** 09/581,004  
**Amendment dated:** September 9, 2003  
**Reply to Office Action of:** June 24, 2003

**MTS-3200US**

**Remarks/Arguments:**

**Specification**

As requested, a new Abstract is now enclosed.

**Section 112 Rejections**

Claim 1 has been objected-to, because of the term "and/or" being indefinite. Applicants have now amended claim 1 by deleting "and/or storing the generated circumferential state image" from the claim. Amended claim 1 is now in condition for allowance.

Applicants have also added new independent claim 40 which includes features similar to original claim 1 (that is, it includes the phrase "and storing the generated circumferential state image"; it does not include "/or"). Newly added claim 40 is also in condition for allowance.

**Allowable Subject Matter**

Amended claim 1 and its dependent claims 1-36 have been allowed over the prior art, and are now in condition for allowance.

Since new claim 40 is similar to original claim 1 (except for "/or"), claim 40 is also in condition for allowance.

**Newly Added Claims 37-39**

Although not the same, method claim 37 includes features that are similar to allowable features of claim 1 and is, therefore, also allowable over the prior art. Favorable consideration is respectfully requested for method claim 37.

Basis for dependent claims 38 and 39 may be found, for example, in claims 6 and 19, respectively. Favorable consideration is respectfully requested for claims 38 and 39.

**Amendment in the Preamble of the Claims**

Applicants note that in the preamble of each claim, "driving-operation assist" has been amended to "vehicle-operation assist". Applicants believe that this more clearly describes the invention. Basis for "vehicle" may be found, for example, in the specification at page 15, lines 3-10.

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**Certified Copies of Priority Documents**

This application is a U.S. National Phase Application of PCT International application PCT/JP99/05509.

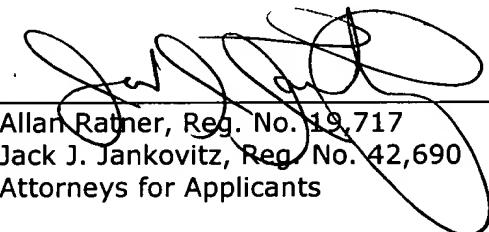
In the Office Action Summary, the Examiner has not acknowledged receiving certified copies of the priority documents. In the Notice of Acceptance of Application dated August 10, 2000, by the USPTO as the Designated Office, the certified copies were listed as received. Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner also acknowledge receipt of such documents.

**Conclusion**

Claims 1-36 are in condition for allowance.

Newly added claims 37-40 are also in condition for allowance.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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Allan Rother, Reg. No. 19,717  
Jack J. Jankovitz, Reg. No. 42,690  
Attorneys for Applicants

JJJ/fp  
Attachment: Abstract

Dated: September 9, 2003

P.O. Box 980  
Valley Forge, PA 19482-0980  
(610) 407-0700

The Commissioner for Patents is hereby authorized to charge payment to Deposit Account No. <b>18-0350</b> of any fees associated with this communication.	I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service with sufficient postage as first class mail in an envelope addressed to: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450 on:  <u>September 9, 2003</u> 